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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 013609

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TAGS: PREL UNSC AORC PHUM MNUC KNNP BM IR ID
SUBJECT: IO PDAS WARLICK'S MEETING WITH FORMER FORMIN ALI
ALATAS

Classified By: John A. Heffern, Charge. Reason: 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. (C) Summary. On December 19, IO PDAS James B. Warlick met with Ali Alatas, former Foreign Minister of Indonesia (1987-99), to discuss Indonesia's upcoming term as a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. Alatas said that both President Yudhoyono (SBY) and Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda were interested in practical and flexible approaches. He cautioned that external players, even including ASEAN, had limited leverage over the Burmese regime, but he opined that there may be an opening for a constructive UN role. Alatas said he believed that SBY wanted to become a player on Mideast issues, but recognized Indonesia's limitations in this area. On the Iranian nuclear issue, Alatas said he thought that the GOI was not yet fully convinced that Iran intends to develop weapons. He criticized the U.S. for "inconsistency" on nuclear issues, citing the cases of the DPRK and India. End summary.

Burma

2.(C) PDAS Warlick said that by placing Burma on its agenda, the Security Council was acknowledging the regional destabilizing effect of outflows of refugees and other consequences of the SPDC's repressive policies. Warlick said that we wanted to call the Burmese regime to accountability, and noted that Indonesia's position would be very influential. Alatas replied that Indonesia's position on any UNSC resolution would depend on its substance, but would also require close coordination with other ASEAN members. He averred that external actors such as the UN or even ASEAN had very little influence with the SPDC. (Note: Alatas has extensive first-hand knowledge of the regime. He served as Presidential Envoy to Burma under former President Megawati and accompanied President Yudhoyono to Rangoon in his March. End note.) The SPDC, Alatas said, does not care what the outside world thinks, and has shrugged off foreign pressure in the past. He noted, however, that Under Secretary General Gambari's call on Aung San Suu Kyi seems to indicate that the SPDC has heeded advice "not to make the U.N. the enemy."

¶3. (C) Alatas said he "didn't dare predict" the outcome of the SPDC's national dialogue. Indonesia, he said, had been frustrated in its efforts to interest the SPDC in its own experience as a model for reform. The SPDC still saw the Suharto-era New Order as a paradigm, since that former Indonesian regime institutionalized military participation in political and economic life. Alatas noted, however, that the Burmese regime seems to trust Indonesia more than other international actors. This is because of the two countries'

mutual support during their struggles for independence, and because unlike Thailand and Singapore, Indonesia's engagement with the SPDC is not influenced by commercial factors.

¶4. (C) PDAS Warlick said that the U.S. needed the support of China and others to conclude an effective UNSC resolution on Burma, and would have to work with other members such as China. Alatas said that the GOI had urged both China and India not to "become protectors" of the Burmese regime. He observed that this would be a difficult issue for Indonesia, since Jakarta would have to reconcile its responsibilities as a UNSC member and an ASEAN leader. Alatas said that ASEAN foreign ministers tend to take a tougher line on Burma than ASEAN heads of government, who remain reluctant to confront the SPDC.

NAM

¶5. (C) PDAS Warlick asked how Indonesia's role as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement would influence its behavior on the UNSC. Alatas said that while the GOI would consult with the NAM caucus, he doubted whether this grouping would often reach a unified position. President Yudhoyono, he said, was interested in concrete outcomes, and this meant that Indonesia would likely take a relatively flexible approach to issues before the UNSC. Foreign Minister Wirajuda, he said, was similarly-minded, but Alatas cautioned that we might have difficulty with positions developed by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) bureaucracy.

Mideast

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¶6. (C) Alatas said SBY wanted to be more active in the Mideast than past Indonesian presidents. It had taken some time for SBY to grasp the complexities of the region but he was now up to speed. In Palestine, Alatas said, SBY is trusted by both President Abbas and Hamas, and he is also on good terms with the Arab countries and Iran. Indonesia does not have diplomatic relations with Israel, Alatas conceded, but the relationship "is not one of hostility" and "the Israelis know what we think." Alatas commented that Indonesia's role would be limited, because "both carrots and sticks are needed," and Indonesia has few of either. The United States would remain the most important mediator of the conflict. Nevertheless, SBY was "collecting inputs" in order to decide how the GOI could be helpful in the region, but this would not necessarily translate into an Indonesian Mideast initiative on the UNSC.

¶7. (C) Alatas said he hoped that we would reinvigorate the Quartet. PDAS Warlick said this is what we intend to do under the incoming Secretary General. We want to address the Mideast in the U.N., he said, but we want to avoid exercises such as debating unacceptable UNSC resolutions - of the type repeatedly introduced by Qatar, for example - that serve only to isolate the U.S. and compel our use of the veto. Alatas said that he felt Qatar behaved the way it did because it wanted to be seen as "doing something" by the Palestinians and by other OIC members. He added that he did not believe that Indonesia would resort to such tactics on the UNSC.

Iranian Nuclear Program/IAEA

¶8. (C) PDAS Warlick asked for Alatas' interpretation of the GOI's stance on the Iranian nuclear issue, including Indonesia's abstention on the IAEA Board of Governors' vote last February. This was an issue that the Security Council would take up, he noted. Alatas responded that the GOI's long-held basic position on the matter is straight-forward: Indonesia is "totally opposed" to the development of nuclear weapons, but "totally supportive" of individual countries'

right to develop civilian nuclear power. The GOI had made this clear to the Iranians, he added. Alatas said he believed the GOI was not yet convinced that Iran was intent on developing nuclear weapons, and said that U.S. policy sent mixed signals on the nuclear issue. Alatas said that the U.S.-India agreement on development of nuclear technology seemed to indicate a U.S. double standard, and he wondered "what it is really all about." He pointed out the contrast between our reactions to Iran's and the DPRK's nuclear programs. PDAS Warlick countered that Iran had a long history of concealing its program, and that if the Iranians had merely wanted a civilian nuclear program, they could have accepted Russia's offer to cooperate. Alatas said he could not explain the Iranians' nuclear program, but commented that they were playing their diplomatic hand shrewdly.

Sanctions

¶9. (C) On the issue of the application of sanctions, Alatas said the GOI would look at situations on a case-by-case basis. U.S. sanctions against Burma had had no effect, he said, whereas U.S. measures targeting banks used by the DPRK seemed to have been effective.

Peacekeeping

¶10. (C) PDAS Warlick expressed appreciation for Indonesia's contribution to UNIFIL and asked for Alatas' views on Indonesia's possible participation in future peacekeeping operations. Alatas said the GOI would be willing to consider such participation, but cautioned that this would be limited to actual UN peacekeeping operations and should not be construed as willingness to contribute troops to ad hoc "coalitions of the willing."

¶11. (U) PDAS Warlick did not have an opportunity to clear this message.

HEFFERN